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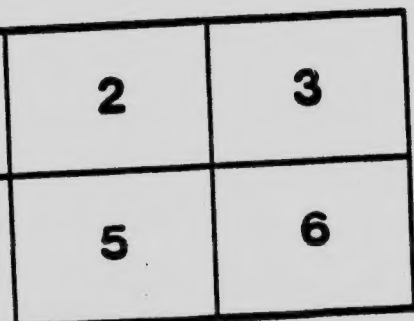
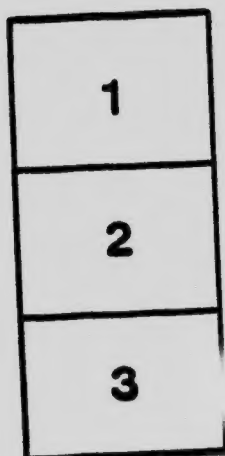
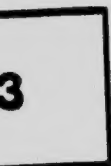
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RYMES
OF A
NORTHLAND

HUGH L. WARREN

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RHYMES OF A NORTHLAND





*Far in the high north where scenery is grander,
Kissed in the twilight by the frost and the dew;
Great valleys amazing and hillsides in splendor
Are whispering old times a welcome to you.*

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Rhymes of a Northland

By Hugh L. Warren

FREDERICK D. GOODCHILD
PUBLISHER · - - - TORONTO

PS 8545

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1920

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TO MOTHER

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FOREWORD

I RHYME not of a city's glory
Nor old farm's blossomy pride
Tho' I've lent myself to the eddy
Of the surging human tide.

I have stood in the old farm orchard
And watched the sunkissed buds
Burst in the spell of a moment
To smiling blossomy floods.

But mine is the great high northland,
The forest, dale and the glen,
The beauteous lakes and rivers
And the fearless pioneer men.

WHERE NATURE WHISPERS

FAR in nature's silence
Where pines are arched above,
Snow capped lies the Northland;
Its code of law is love.
Cling to timbered valleys,
The Northstar points the way,
Come and know its freedom,
Quit dollar gods to-day.
Come and see its sunshine
A-trickle through the pines
Flick'ring little arrows
In undulating lines;
Pale in golden grandeur,
Yet bright with heaven's glow,
Kind old mother nature
Makes jewels from the snow.
Ev'ry twig is beaded,
Each bead a crystal light,
Ev'ry bough is bending
Beneath its load of white.
Each a part of nature,
Chaste as an angel's soul;
Whisp'ring to us, "Brother,
Be pure and clean and whole."

THE TENDERFOOT

THERE'S rich and poor in the city, with its million lights ablaze,
But here's a man who's balanced at the parting of the ways.
He's only one of the workers. He toils for his daily bread.
There are calloused lumps upon his hands, and grey hairs on his head.
Each day he worked for a master who paid but a scrumpy wage,
And his hungry little children were his speedometer gauge.

He sways there in the balance, and furrows up his brow,
A thought has crept into his brain of the ancient wedlock vow.
He promised his wife upon a day that then was bright as sun,
To love, provide for, and protect her, until his life was done;
Now he deeply weighs in the balance the chance on the Northland trail
As against the chance in the factory, where to try is but to fail.

He said to his wife and kiddies, "You know I have done my best
At bringing home a worker's cheque to feather up our nest;

The frost of age is on my brow and my youthful
strength has fled;

The growing burden of my debts is pulling me down
like lead.

Now I sway in the balance, the decision I wish to make,
Shall I stick to the factory, or hike to the north and
stake?

"The north is a great broad country and they say
there's a chance for all,

Who have the courage to hit the trail and try the game
at all.

Now it's up to you, dear wifey, just say the word, and
I'll go

And search for gold up yonder in a fathomless field
of snow.

They say there are mighty rivers, little mountains, and
icebergs too,

But I'll wend my way among them, and I'll bring the
gold to you."

Golden City was an infant at the northern end of the
lake,

When this old and greyhaired tenderfoot selected his
grubstake,

And Bruce penned his name on record as a legal
licensee,

As he reached for his last ten spot, like a grandma
would for tea.

He is now among the pioneers and he hears their pleas-
ant jest,

His heart goes out among them; and to him they are
the best.

They gather him in with laughter, and they order up
the drinks.

They introduce him to Oullette and the blackeyed,
Parisian minx.

He smiles his smiles upon them, but is calm, austere
and wise,

For he's picking bits of knowledge of the gold camp
from the boys

He mingles with prospectors, and acquaintance grows
with speed,

For the high north has a friendship never born of city
greed.

Now the lure of the game has got him enveloped in
its wave,

And he revels with oldtimers, but is thoughtful, calm
and grave.

Far out of the smoky bar-room and into the forest
glen,

The magic spell of his longing thoughts go drifting
now and then.

He sees the golden dew-drops that lurk in a white
quartz vein;

And plans a future before him, in the workings of his
brain.

Next morning dawned with a crystal sun and biting
frosty haze,

And once again before him, there is a parting of the
ways.

A parting of the ways, boys, where that wondrous
fate was kind,

Which sometimes leads a tenderfoot to the very rich-
est find.

With the guess of a snail he chose a trail he could not
tell you why,
And travelled on till evening's dawn and the jewelled
stars lit the sky.

Now he's out in the great lone land, where silence
wakes a fear,
And the thrill of the game encounters with lone nights
dark and drear,
But the little blaze he kindled like a beacon in the
night,
Like a sparkling jewel or diamond in the northland's
robe of white,
Is life, home, and companion, to this lone man in the
cold;
Hallowed angel of the prospector, precursor of the
gold.

With pick and shovel now he's ready, to hit the virgin
snow
And search for gold beneath it, in the bedrock down
below.
With herculean efforts, here and there, he moves the
snow and clay
And sometimes thinks he's struck it till these visions
pass away.
But there's darker visions kindled in his fancied scenes
by night
And he longs for daylight's dawning for the next
round in the fight.

And there, wrapped up in the blankets in his lean-to
made of brush,
The great stillness all about him like a burden seemed
to crush;

But he knows he sought the northland with his life's
last hope at stake.
And there's no such thing as funk; he has simply
got to make,
Simply got to face the hardships, trust his God the
hand of fate;
Let no thought of failure try him; keep his heart and
nerves elate.

While the light of morning's dawning, by the fire's
gentle glow,
He eats his beans and bacon, and decides this day to
go
O'er the rocky cliffs that bristle up some distance to
the west;
And with all his might at prospecting, to put them to
the test.
He crosses the lowland muskeg with its scrubby, stunt-
ed trees,
Where the infernal sagebrush jungle entwine about
his knees.

He finds the rock—the kind he heard, bore the longed
for yellow stuff,—
And wires in to dig a trench by the edge of a rocky
bluff,
With mighty efforts he whirls floats and earth into the
air,
And soon there is before him a big quartz vein shin-
ing bare.
He followed down the rusty mass where dotted roots
enfold,
And with the pick broke loose some chunks, star-
spangled with the gold.

Elated with eccentric glee, clear, frantic, like a boy,
His right hand sought his left, by gee, a handshake
there with joy.

Then he dropped down on his tired knees and with
calloused hands began,

To fill his sack with golden lumps for there was no
need to pan.

The yellow gold was shot through quartz and it stood
out bright and clear,

Which brought his stout old heart a hope and his
smoke dimmed eyes a tear.

Then he staked the claim and wrote his name three
times upon each post,

'Twas witnessed by a big full moon and the stars a
countless host,

That blinked in dreary grandeur from the steely blue
of the sky

On this lonely man of the pioneer clan; one of the
men who try,

One of the men who tried, and won, with a will, and
nerve of steel.

He fought the fight and won the prize and Oh! God,
the fight was real.

But his heart was light and that very night, he hit the
homeward trail,

The gold in the sack upon his back propelled him like
a sail.

And ere the little hours gave vent to the dawning day
Porcupine Lake like a huge snowflake in the mystic
moonbeams lay,

And to the north on the other shore the jetting fires
gleam,
Piercing the night with a ray of light, like an ancient
seer's dream.

Again he's in Golden City, and the boys are elate with
glee,
For the nuggets of gold he took from his sack were a
sight for all to see.
An engineer gazed astonished then mentioned a cheque
for some dough;
And the old boy rubbing his whiskers, quietly said,
"It's a go."
In his dreams that night—a realm of light—an old
sweetheart long his wife,
His kiddies three, about his knee and living no longer
a strife,
Lilacs bloomed by his cottage door and no landlord
shouted, "rent";
He thanked the gods for the joy of his heart, he was
content—content.

BITTER AWAKENING

O H! Little fairy of my dreams,
Dear heart that beats so true,
Permit me here in the Loneland
To write this verse for you.

Permit me to say, my smiling dear,
Ere this gloomy day is spent;
Your little face is hiding here
In the solitude of my tent.

And once in a while it smiles, you see,
That face like a sweet June rose;
And each little smile brings joy to me,
Then my eyes in a love dream close.

I dream a dream with an endless theme,
See gold veins on my claim,
A cottage clothed in a flowery realm,
And an annex to my name.

A squirrel churrs loud on my forest lawn,
And I wake with a sudden start—
To find my gold and cottage gone;
Gone to, is my dear girl's heart.

FAREWELL LITTLE CABIN

FAREWELL, little cabin, you've served me well,
But the time is up and I'll go.
Stay here, little cabin, and slumber a spell;
In time I'll be back, you know.
It hurts me sore to say farewell,
As I look at your old, grim wall;
'Tis three score months and then a spell,
Since I made you the first glad call.

Through all this time you've sheltered me,
Here in the forest dim.
Your little door was open wide
To all that would come in.
Through all this time you've been to me
My little cottage dome;
The only place in all the world
I had to call my home.

Farewell, little cabin, I hate to go
And leave you here alone;
But here's my squirrel and knock-kneed hare,
I leave you, as their home.
Good Old Squirrel that scampered about—
And was my friend and mate;
You can have my homemade chair;
The hare can have my plate.

Help yourselves to the grub, good pals,
And eat it up to your fill:
I'm beating it out to the peopled world,
But want to come back, and will:
Back to my Old Log Cabin,
Where all my hopes unfurled;
Back to my camp, when I've had a ramp
In the busy outside world.

NATURE'S WELCOME

FAR in the high North where scenery is grander,
Kissed in the twilight by the frost and the dew
Great valleys amazing and hillsides in splendor
Are whisp'ring old-timer a welcome to you.

Dim are the days when you camped on my bosom,
Pitching your tent when ambition was strong.
Now spurned by a city, again you have chosen
Old Mother Nature who sanctions no wrong.

Oh! son of the frontier my vastness exploring,
Think of the nights when you gazed on my stars;
While others in rapture of dullness were snoring
You spooned with the planets from Saturn to Mars.

You dreamed in my borders of cities and places,
Rending your heart with a love that's forlorn;
Now sadder and wiser you seek my broad spaces—
Oh! come to my bosom and forget of their scorn.

Yes, cushion yourself on a bed of my balsam;
Breathe in my air it will soon make you whole.
Oh! blood of my arteries and child of my bosom,
Here in my freedom find balm for your soul.

LITTLE SUNSHINE

LITTLE Sunshine, see old Phoebus,
Mighty planet far above,
As you watch him see him blinking
Dazzled by your eyes of love.
All his rays are concentrated;
Ev'ry joy he can impart
Is combined and deeply seated
In your sweet and mirthful heart.

Perfumed flowers, honey beaded,
Cast wherever stars may gleam,
Can you gather all your beauty
Into one more perfect dream?
Know we well your sweet June fragrance,
Aided by the vase and knife,
Know you too that God was smiling
When He gave this maiden life.

AN OLD TIMER

A DIGGER of the olden school,
I've mucked an' _____ each day;
I've cast a be _____ catch a fo d

But none have come my way;
And now I'm out in the lone land,
A-searching for the gold.
Ontario's bitter northland
Has called me to its fold.

O'er rocks and boggy woodland fen
I've toiled both day and night,
My clothes were ravelled to the hem,
My heart was always light.
I've worked in the rocky outcrops
By forest, lake and stream,
I've picked upon the mountain tops.
I've chased a golden dream.

Here's the thing I've been chasing,
At last it shines aglow—
From a goodly vein embracing
A million tons I know;
I saw this rusty sulphite streak
The other day at noon,
With pick and shovel sought to seek
And lo! I'm rich so soon.

The tall pines bend and forward bow,
My tent's a tiny speck;
Oh! What a lucky thing that vow
I made to prospect Teck.

Though men have come and gone before,
And said 'twas all too plain—
The township had no hidden store;
Likewise no golden vein.

But here it's true and plain to you,
The thing I want to say;
A mine boomed up and prospered too,
The ground you threw away.
I came to Teck a broken wreck,
Dug in and worked a day;
And now they're n king golden brick—
A million is my pay.

AN EASTER GREETING

JUST a little word in rhyming
To convey a kindly thought
To a little maid that's dreaming
In a rustic woodland cot.

It's Easter greetings that I send
To my silent little friend,
The hearts pulsating trembling tone
Angel whispers speak alone;
Your joy, your peace and happy fare
Crowns the summit of my care.

MUSINGS

THE storm has passed in its anger,
But the dear old Lake's still here,
And the sun is kissing the lilies,
With a mother's kiss so dear.

The evening is gilded in sunshine,
The islands lie drowsily sweet;
Waters and shores are caressing
For the storm has passed in defeat.

I'm sitting alone in my little boat,
Alone on the waters clear;
Watching the storm-wrecked lilies float,
Listening to things I hear.

There's a little fairy message
Being whispered in my ear,
Through an airy passage, from
The northland, bright and clear.

'Tis a rumbling, little message,
But suggests the kindest thought
Of a little friend reclining
In a well remembered spot,

Tiny little whispers seem
To pierce the still, sweet air,
And gently tap my longing heart
And seem to linger there.

Then lo! there is a vision
Clear as crystal light;
Oh! God is this delusion,
Or may I trust my sight?

Mystic, yet how plain to me,
The face of one I know,
A friend I knew and treasured
In the buried long ago.

Calmly I sit and watch that face
With its smiling, dreamy eyes.
Of pity here, there is no trace,
And I hear but one word—lies.

Slowly I think of a man I know,
Who once had been my friend;
Who carried tales like slimy snails
To hurt me in the end.

With no reproach will I sin my soul,
But through weary years I'll wait,
And maybe, some day he'll break away—
Confess, and clean the slate.

My little bark floats lightly
On the waters, rippling green,
My thoughts go back to yesterday
And the things that might have been.

KAISER BILL'S MISTAKE OR THE PROSPECTOR'S DREAM

THE news went rattling round the world: The
Kaiser's doom was sealed,
An armistice will soon be signed, for the Central
Powers yield,
And with the news there sprang a spirit, 'twas fierce,
wild eyed with greed;
'The gnawing hope of golden gain, for it's gold the
nations need.

Lo, what news from out the chaos of a badly muddled
world?
What thrills it brought from northern trails, where
magic spells are hurled!
Where the goal in life's attraction is a call to pick and
pan,
And the vital blood of action athrill in the pioneer man.

How the spirit generated—'twas contagious as the
"flu,"
And once in a while a man cashed in; but what is that
to you?
'Twas the ray of hope that lingered, yes, the burning
spark of light
Bound Old Bill and me together in unwritten pledge
that night.

Well, we both knew a little, and our nerves were all
elate;
We had played the game together since the year of
nineteen eight—

Faced the frost fiend grim and bitter, then the muskeg
and the fly—
Now we're on the trail together, and we'll find the gold
or die.

Many a trail leads northward, to the brink of a bound-
less land,
But only a few lead onward to where Hudson lost com-
mand.
Bill and I are enthusiasts, and we fear no man or beast,
So we break a trail through swamp and swale that
leads us to the east.

Our packs are growing heavy, and the scrub spruce
seems to throng,
But the muskeg's getting stiffer, as the frost fiend
creeps along;
In hazy snow that blinds our eyes, that's driven fast
and straight,
We're battling fiercely onward to the northland's
golden gate.

Every step is a pleasure, and every step is a pain,
But when we were in the south, how we longed for the
north again.
Yes, Bill had said in Bermuda, "This damnable land
I hate,
And in my dream I see a gleam—old Cobalt's silvery
gate."

At times it seemed we would tire, but hope plucked up
with the thought,
"Just over the hog-back yonder must be our golden
spot."

On we crunch through frozen snow, athrill with our
golden dream,
And once in a while a cat-faced owl wakes echoes with
his scream.

We camp the nights in frozen moss, by a fire blazing
high,
We hear the howl of hungry wolves, and the ball
moose bellowed sigh.
The snow hangs up on the jungled fir, and gleams like
magic mounds,
And Bill and I in the reindeer moss decipher out the
sounds.

Again we start on the lonely trail to wend our way
along—
“Say, Bill, is this the track of man, or has my head
gone wrong?
Look, there is the mark of axe work, and a trench dug
in the sand;
In heaven’s name, are we dreaming things in this
stark and frozen land?”

No, it’s no dream, it’s true enough—there is someone
camping here.
Then Bill’s brown eyes sparkled with surprise, and he
said, “It’s mighty queer,
In the heart of desolation, ’mid a shroud of glimmer-
ing frost—
Oh, it may be they’re survivors from some battleship
that’s lost.

"We've been bearing east for many days and must be
near the coast,
This cabin here has just been built, and I wonder who's
the host."

With wonder staring from our eyes, we knocked upon
the door.

When we heard the inmates start to rise, we wondered
more and more.

Then the door swung rudely open, and a voice said,
"Vat you vant?

Ase you come to see if I vos steal der spruce tree from
der svamp?

Dey shase me from oudt der Yourip, und I vant some
blace to hide.

Vell, vhy you stand there und look und stare—vhy not
you come inside?"

Astounded beyond the use of words, both Bill and I
felt ill.

Whom do you think we found in the north but famous
Kaiser Bill.

In the thickest haze of great amaze we stepped right
in the door,

And another shock awaited there—Von Hindie on
the floor!

There were other four within the camp—I do not
know their names;

They told us then that they came north in connection
with some claims.

Molybdenite, they said it was, they had got some few
years back—

A little deal with politicians to balance up the pack.

Now Kaiser Bill looked slightly grieved, but was calm
right to the core,
His face looked down in thoughtful frown, with eyes
like an angry boar.
Then he raised his hand, his one good hand, and pointed
to the east,
Saying, "Over dere in Ongland they vos calling me
'der beast.' "

He stepped up to the cabin door, with official Prussian
stride,
Then blurted out with anger, "Has dot scoundrel, Vil-
son, died?
Yes, I vill told to you dot story, Von Hindenburg und
me,
Of von scoundrel vots called Vilson—he dinks he own
der sea.

"At first der var go very vell; den I bust up some big
boat,
Und Voodrow Vilson get mad like hell, und send dis
ugly note:
'Now, Kaiser Bill, you stop dot vork, or I'll come mit
Unkle Sam,
Und make you not to fight like shark, but der vay of
Christian man.'

"Dere is anodder von called Borden, vhat struts about
mit grace;
He vos a pardner mit two George, vot own dot island
place.

He send some big Canadians vot just fight like vild-
cat men,
Und ven dey come at der Chermans, vell, I dink ve're
beaten den.

"I vos try for sleep von night pefore I leaf dot place,
Berlin,
Ven Gott he beat upon mein door, den shout, 'May I
come in?'
He say, 'Mein frien, mein frien der Kaiser, you fear
you loose dat fight,
Den vhy you not buildt some great big gun und fight
mit all your might?'"

"Dot Gott is yet mein pardner—vell, I dink I try some
more,
Den I get in von big submarine und sail to Labrador,
Und here I gets der molybdenite, to hard der hard steel
yet,
To buildt some gun, such mighty gun dat der vorld
get scare, you bet.

"Und now mein friendt der prospect man, vill you
have some Cherman beer?
I : u now dot Foch in Yourip, I vish I had him
here—"

But here his mind went wandering, and he mumbled
something low ;
I think it was this prayer he said, though I'm not quite
sure I know :

"O Gott vot is mein pardtner, I toldt you good und
vell,
Dot ven I's dead und finished I vant to go to hell,

Und if you'll sent dot Foch und Haig, I'll meet dem
at der gate,
Und see dot dey're looked after vell on der very hottest
gate."

The Kaiser's beer went mighty well, but it started me
to kick,

And partner Bill is a quiet guy who wants no foolish
trick;

So he slugged me in the shortest ribs, which brought
me wide awake,

And it seems that I'd been dreaming about Kaiser
Bill's mistake.

REMEMBRANCE

I'M thinking of you, my little friend,
To-night on old Broadway;
Though I'm out here in the Northland
Where the forest's dim and grey.
But most of the time it's sunlit,
And shines with a friendly glow:
The lake's a smile in the Northland style,
That you'd just love, I know

But I'm lonely without you, dearie,
I think of you each day;
And my life would be so cheery
If I had my little May.
We'd frolic about like children
And be happy as could be;
Out in the great free Northland,
My girl, dear May and me.

HELLO! LITTLE CABIN

HELLO! Little cabin I'm coming back, through
forest, dale and glen,
O'er craggy peaks and wooded cliffs to the
land of the pioneer men.

I've shouldered my pack, I've hit the trail—I'm struggling home to you,
And I know that there, in the jack-pine grove, you're waiting, staunch and true.

Seven long years have stolen away since I bade you a fond farewell—

Seven long years of night and day, I left you to slumber a spell.

I drifted away to the peopled land, to gaudy lights aflame,

Where the rush, the noise, Plutocracy's lies, were more than I could bear.

But I promised you then I'd call again, and now I'm on my way,

And there you are in the jackpine grove, 'neath a roof of Northland clay.

I greet you warm from a troubled heart, so smitten with the world—

For in my life you've played a part in memory's years unfurled.

Hello! Little cabin, I'm glad I'm back, but where's my squirrel and hare?

The pets I had that I loved so well—the pals I left in your care?

"Ah! Mould'ring years have wrought their work, and
your pets they are no more—
Their tiny bones lay crumbling now, in the corner by
my door."

Well! I've yet got you old cabin, where the north
lights dance and play,
And the tall jackpine with glory shine in the sun-
beams of the day;
And here I'll forget the grasping world, and Plutes
who graft with glee—
Away from the strife of a wage slave's life, Thank
God! I know I'm free.

QUEEN OF THE NORTHLAND

BENEATH the big moon in the heavens,
Aglow in its pale, sweet light,
Is one little maid in the northland—
I'm dreaming of her to-night.

The old city's athrong with faces,
That shine in the light of man;
Ten thousand tungstens light the spaces,
Paints and powder coat the tan.

But to me they are artificial,
And inferior, yes by far,
To one little face in the Northland,
Where the rouge could only mar.

There where God in His skill and kindness,
Created a forest green;
Made the mountains, lakes and rivers—
And a maiden for a queen.

THE CRIPPLE CREEK TRAIL

O H! luring trail of the Northland that calls us
out to pain,
You tempt us with your sunshine, then drench
us through with rain;
You flaunted down these last few years the rich things
you'd in store,
Now see my eyes with blood red tears that drip in
many score.

Your gold is good and acts as food to the weary tired
brain;
But you cruelly pry on the men who try, and make
them suffer pain—
And a pain not of the toothache kind that's banished
with dental tool
But the spiteful hate of a hell on earth, that proves
a man a fool.

Your ways we know when its fifty below and the
northlights sheen the sky.
What's got us beat is your tropic heat and how devils
have learned to fly.
You load us down with a mighty pack, our food and
tools and tent,
And we seek the balm of a Northland trail with delud-
ed fool's content.

But you meet us there with hell aflame and spiteful
eyes agleam,
You initiate on the base-line straight, and we wake
from a golden dream.

The muskeg lays before us like a desert made to mock,
And we wade and plunge through watery sponge with
throats as dry as chalk.

But we grind our teeth and fight along and think
when we've reached the shore,
With the muskeg passed we'll hurry on, but we meet
with hell once more;
Like a barbwire snare the Huns prepare the jumbled
windfalls lay,
And we climb and fall and climb again throughout
the long June day.

Oh! But the trail is weary and long, and each mile
is worse than three,
But the thought of the gold is luring us on, the gold
you promised to me.
The blackflies about us in myriads, and each one bites
like a dog;
Like bloodthirsty hounds they're chasing us through
this desolate gutter and bog.

Night and day we're their humble prey, as we seek
to find the gold
And nothing on earth will drive them away but the
coming frost and cold;
I'm bit through the clothes and look at my nose, see
my forehead's hanging low;
And that awful red that leaks from my head with an
oozy creepy flow.

As the blood comes out, it clots about in streaks upon
the skin,
And the beastly flies—God curse their eyes—they leave
their bayonets in;
Your head swells up like a poisoned pup, and you lift
your brow to see;
And the sweat boils out and burns like hell—Oh! pard
take a trip with me.

You stoop to pass beneath a log that's lodged too high
to climb,
It grips your pack and you tumble back in the greenish
yellow slime;
The flies rage about like hungry wolves and your
flesh is a burning heat;
And your eardrums ring as your heart pumps blood
like a little blast each beat.

It may be all rot about hell being so hot and the poor
burning soul never dies,
But can it be true the Bible scribe knew of the Cripple
Creek Trail and the flies;
If so, he did well in painting his hell; but a man hates
himself at the thought,
His ambition so great has led to the gate and through
to a hell so hot.

AN OLD FADED COTTAGE

I CAN hear the Angels humming
When the twilight's softly coming
And I dwell in memory,
I can hear an anger foaming,
When my thoughts go lightly roaming,
To a cottage dear to me.
'Tis a cottage in a pinegrove
Gently dimmed by sun and rain,
'Twas my fountain spring of pleasure;
'Tis my deep abyss of pain.

Yet my dear old faded cottage,
How pleasant are the dreams
Of our now grown old acquaintance,
But how fresh and new it seems!
For in all my fruitless wanderings
In my fancied scenery great,
There's a little rustic cottage
Majestic and sedate,

'Tis a dear old faded cottage
In a grove of pine trees tall,
In my list of treasured memories
'Tis a mountain on the wall.
For it's home sweet home to someone
That I found there years ago,
On a bleak December evening
When the ground was white with snow.

THE MAPLE

OH! Maple grove soft and gentle
Toss emblems on the breeze,
Spread out nature's patchwork mantle;
Entwine us in your leaves.
Beneath your sheltry shade we rest,
Like babes upon their mothers' breast.

In autumn what a golden hue
Your leaves have turned to red,
For nature's sent the frost and dew
To call them down to bed;
Whispering farewell as they pass
To wintry beds among the grass.

You are to civilization
What Pines are to the North,
And you are to all creation
A tree of golden worth.
The sugar, shade and heat you lend,
Have made you man's undying friend.

SMILE

SMILE, and be glad in the sunshine,
There's a bit of the old world, yours.
Sure you get the fragrance of flowers
That's aired from the lowlands and moors;
You use up the air in your breathing
And water that falls down as rain,
You can catch and drink of it freely,
And no one will dare to complain.
You should be real anxious for action,
And pleased to get working each day;
Accepting with thanks the wee fraction
The Plute will return you as pay.
So why don't you smile and be jolly
And tell all the world that you're glad;
The high cost of living's all folly
And profiteers patriots, by gad!

THE SPELL OF A NORTHLAND STREAM

WOULD you mind me liking, darling,
If I liked you true and good?
Would you mind me brooding, darling,
If 'twas in the lonely wood?—
If 'twas by a Northland stream
Where the foliage dips in dream
Beaded petals in the brook?

Beaded petals dipping drowsily
In the freshness of the stream
Seem to greet me loud, carously,
As I seek the brook to dream;
Jetting shadows flit so giddily
Dancing merrily up and down;
Delving half beneath the ripples,
Forming others as they drown.

Lounging mutely by the border
Where the water flows in order,
And my magic dreams go farther
Than to music's measured note:
Each ripple rolls so mellow
In my dreams it seems to bellow—
See the mirage angel yonder
In a halo sweetly float!

Breathless, smiling, eyes beguiling,
Heart elate, and lips a-crave,
I, in eager straining, yearning,
Give the little ripples warning
Not to plunge my visioned angel
Into vapory, nameless grave.

Oh! Heaven came to bless me
And in angel arms caressed me,
By this little Northland stream:
Every vibrant nerve within me
Trembling readily with delight;
Tender boughs of drougthy foliage
Bracing verdant at the sight.

No human heart, no lip or pen
Could reproduce this sight for men;
Her poise, her mood, her silent jest,
Is greater than description's best:
Shapely head so sweet reclining,
In her eyes all heaven shining;
Just such eyes as Cicero knew,
And saw the soul come shining through.

Stray little curls of hair hung down
From luxurious waves of fernie brown;
Angelo's chisel couldn't trace
Diviner, shapelier, sweeter face;
With little features, tiny nose,
And pearly lips, like sweetest rose;
With angel smile St. Eloise wore
E'er Abelard knocked on Fulbert's door.

While enveloped in this rapture
Stranger scenery gathers round,
Every shimmering rock or knoll
Speedily turns to golden mound;
Oh! such view of Northland scenery,
Eyes of man ne'er had before;
But I'm waiting, mutely waiting—
Something grander, something more.

'Tis for whispered words I'm waiting;
Whispered words of mutual care,
Flowing from the lips I worship
Of my angel floating there.

Oh! The silence rudely broken
Turned delight to awful dread,
As sudden blast of stronger wind
Blew the halo from her head;
Little ripples burst with frenzy
Into dark foreboding wave,
And my heart leaped up dictating—
"Save your sweetheart, Save her! Save!"

I, in fear my sweetheart's drowning
Quite forget it's all a dream,
Plunge myself beneath the surface
Splashing wildly in the stream;
Thoroughly wakened, not forgetting
All the visions here about—
Quite aware I've had a wetting
Drag myself, some wiser out.

THE OVERFLOWING WELL

AT cache eighty-three on the G.T.P.,
When we built the road through there,
Some men came in from near and far
In search of a better fare.

And among the pioneer actors
Who labored to build that road,
For the giant mammoth tractors
To haul over their heavy load;

Was a woman of foreign origin
An Austrian, I think, by birth;
First of her sex on the margin
Of Ontario's frozen north.

In an uncouth old log cabin,
Roughly built of round pine wood,
This queer old dame was laboring
At cooking the Bohunks' food.

In the depth of bitter winter
They had dug a little cell,
In the frozen snowy mixture
And had christened it the well.

In Spring when the wind and sunshine
Turned to water all the snow,
The winter well like youth sublime
Went rambling to and fro.

She'd walk a hundred yards or more
To this thing she called her well,
Her bare feet on the cold earth floor;
And I wondered how she'd tell.

'Twas all afloat, she had no boat,
But through the water plunged;
Her well washed feet were red as a beet,
And the muskeg oozed and sponged.

Though strange to me her thoughts might be,
The water was all the same;
A rotten mixed up muskeg tea;
It was habit with the dame.

She cooked for a bunch of Bohunks
About twenty-three in all,
Who flitted about like chipmunks;
Or carved names upon the wall.

They contributed five cents each
From off their daily pay,
To compensate this grim old peach
To mix their grub each day.

One evening in the early Spring,
While the birds were singing gay,
An angel passed on airy wing
To beckon a soul away

Grief came down on the little town
For the quaint old chef had died;
Bidding farewell to the Bohunks round,
As they stood there stupified.

Then hustled about like mad things;
They all got excited bad,
Pulled on the old cook's bonnet strings;
Then wrote on a birch bark pad.

"She passed away this bright May day
In the Northland grim and wild,
And soon will lay beneath the clay
In a graveyard undefiled.

As chef she surely filled the bill,
But she's gone; and who can tell?
It may be that she's searching still
For the overflowing well."

Bury her by the lone spruce tree
At the edge of the muskeg fen,
After she's gone, newcomers will see
There was somebody here but men.

Carve a wooden slab at her head;
Her girlish name engrave,
And say "the poor old cook is dead
Within this lonely grave."

TINSELLED FRIENDSHIP

OH! Show me the way to a true friend—
Show me the way to the true;
Point me a trail that leads to an end,
Where things are vast and new.
I care not if the trail be rough
And mountains bar the way;
I only ask, and that's enough—
For a friend that's a friend to stay.

Bitter, cruel life that strews its strife
On rich and humble slave;
There's one thing real within this life
And that's the cold, cold grave.
A friend, a friend, she pleads her worth
Then fades like dew from grass;
Her gold when put to golden test
Has proved but lowly brass.

Sparkles her alluring diamond,
Blooming flower of May:
A friendship kindred to old Hymen
While gold-dust strews the way.
A thought has stirred within her brain—
Your gold has turned to lead;
'Tis passed and while you nurse your pain,
She'd tread upon your head.

And now you feel so quite alone—
She was a shallow friend;
There's naught for her to dare atone—
'Tis here the bitter end.
The little symptoms play their part

And soon they're bright as flame;
There never was within her heart
A feeling for your name.

She was that kind, the transient kind—
How quick they come and go;
Yet leave a trace in memory's space
That haunt the fire's glow;
Though with you only a moment
She seemed so good and kind;
A vision from the fireplace
Tells a heartstring was entwined.

MEDITATION

AS the gentle breeze and sunshine
From the warmth of heaven's glow
Gives life that's spread with Hand Divine
Where the trees and flowers grow;
So to friendship life is given,
If from nature comes its growth:
Part from this: the friendship's riven,
Grief and sorrow come to both.

HARD LUCK HEINZIE

THEY call me "hard luck" Heinzie, and I guess
they dub me well;
But how such luck has clung to me, is more than
I can tell.

They say, "to stick, to freeze to the game, in time
you're sure to win."

I've prospected now for sixty years, so fear no quit-
ter's sin.

Win! Have I won? Do I look a thing that might
command some gold?

Clad in rags all smeared with dirt; and these white
locks say I'm old;

Old in years and in body, old, too old for the game,—
But why, as I sit here thinking, should I feel that sting
called shame?

When Cobalt first was known, and the silver lured the
crowd,

I was panning dust in the Yukon, where I heard the
call aloud.

My chances there had failed me, as in other lands I'd
been,

But ambition gnawed my very soul, and I played the
game with men.

Men who had won around me, sometimes the ground
I culled,—

They sought and panned a fortune, with my right to
it annulled.

Not that I hadn't tried it, but the might of man is
small,
And the pay streaks were so hidden I seemed to miss
them all.

It was then I bunched my little kit, fingering deep in
my poke,
Where I found some dust that paid my fare, but landed
at Cobalt—broke.
The news of La Rose had stirred the world, and pros-
pectors flocked like sheep.
And once again to the zenith hope, my heart took a
sudden leap.

I struggled for all that was in me, leaped in the game
with the rest,
But the calcite I worked was chalky, and never came
up to the test.
Trethewey was just to the east of me, where the
silver nuggets shine.
It sickens my heart to think of it now, there never
was luck like mine.

Into Elk Lake and Gowganda, I plunged with the first
who went,
Old and not much at packing, but got there with grub-
stake and tent.
Shovelled and picked and assayed, I hurled all the
strength I could spare;
But again close lurking about me, my demon of luck
was there.

The Porcupine boom was coming, the whisper was in
the air;
I followed the Montreal River, crossed country, and
landed there,
And for three long years I rallied, but again 'twas all
in vain,
Each burning hope was an adieu to vanishing prospects of gain.

When that awful fire seethed the land, and jetting
tongues of flame,
Flashed with lightning swiftness, roasted humans,
staked a claim;
A sight of the ghost, that was each post, did an awful
story tell,
For each grinning head, cooked rare and red, seemed
to murmur, "This is hell."

What a gruesome mass of dead and dying, charred
and blackened ruin;
What debris on the high clean north, to greet the
rising moon,—
The same old moon that whispered, or in meditation
said:
"Yours not the worst luck, Hanzie, hear the dying,—
see the dead."

O'er many a mile of untrod land I've hiked with a
searching eye,
And many the night I slept on the ground, when my
blanket was the sky,—

Blazing a trail to wealth untold, for the luckier aged
and youth;

But now, Dear God, the end has come, at last, the
bitter truth.

Yes, I'm too old, the game is played, and the stakes
must stand as they are;

That snug little home I dreamed of in youth has fled
like a fallen star.

To-night I sit by the old tin stove in the cabin I
built up,

With my only friend in the whole wide world,—the
grizzly airedale pup.

He lies by my feet all curled in a heap, and sometimes
helps me snore,

Or stares in my eye when he's asking why, we don't
hit the trail some more.

His friendship's all in all to me, as I near the west of
life,

A lonely man, who clung to the wilds, and never had
home or wife.

But it can't make any difference now, my four score
years and three,

Have been and spent and I can't repent, so don't hiss
shame at me

Think as you look at this old gray head, of the cruel,
ungrateful world,

A rag and a crust I get on trust for the gold my trail's
unfurled.

A SACRED THING

YOU call a kiss a sacred thing—
Ah, true! there you are right
Yet would to God I felt the sting
Of sacred kiss to-night.

In this so sweet the stealthy feet
Of bitterness creeps in,
And lips I'd meet that's honey sweet
Than mine like deathly sin.

And once before I sought the door
Where sacred kisses dwell;
I trusted a score and may be more
No living soul can tell.

Those lips of gold grew deathly cold,
My heart, then sank like lead;
And now I'm told—the news is old—
This little maiden wed.

Ah! lad who sips the bitter wine
Of love that will not blend;
Your altar is the Bach'lor's shrine,
And woman just a friend.

BILL AND THE BEAR

OF prospecting days, when we'd the gold craze,
And the land had a touch of the new,
There's many a joke, still garbed in a cloak—
For no one has told it to you.

There's one of a trip to the Northland,
The cause of Old Bill's vow—
Such dangers he'd never dreamed of;
And smiles at the thought of them now.

We pitched our tent at the foot of a hill,
And fixed things, snug and neat,
For new at the game was partner Bill,
And he feared both cold and heat.

When the camp was fixed and supper on,
By the fire I watched with glee,
The climbing flames go brisk, and on
To the top of an old birch tree.

The "Lumber-jacks" hovered about us,
Like hogs would near a trough,
I set down a tin of "Blue-Nose,"
And the scoundrels carried it off.

Yet Bill seemed rather gleeful,
And at first he took their part,
Till one slushed, into the tea-pail,
Enough muck to load a cart.

Then he cursed the hovering scoundrels,
That scampered from limb to limb,
But they hovered more closely about us,
And chirpingly laughed at him.

I had just cooked a bannock,
And turned it out to cool,
When onto it swooped a "lumber jack,"
And dumped it into a pool.

Then Bill's anger flared up in a hurry,
And he swore it would never abate,
Till he'd left the eyeballs blurry,
In that "lumber jack's" ugly pate.

Then I called him a brand new tenderfoot,
But said he'd get used to the game;
He turned on me like a thunderbolt,
Infuriated at the name.

We made our bed at the back of the tent,
And I slept next the wall,
The jack rabbits came, and round they went;
Then Bill began to bawl.

"It's Bears! It's Bears! They come! They come!
And they'll eat us sure as fate.
Oh can't you get up and stop them some,
Or bar the tent door gate?"

I shook him hard, and called aloud—
"Wake, Bill, you're having a dream."
But he muttered, "Death, with a bear for a shroud,"
And his eyes had a fearful gleam.

Night slid on, and morning came,
With crystal sun aglow—
In sleep I heard Bill speak my name,
And breath the words, "Oh! Oh!"

For through the flap-door of the tent,
Old Bruin pushed his head,
And stood and heard poor Bill's lament,
And watched him crouch in bed.

I faced the wall in huge content,
And drifted on in dream;
With rapid pokes, Bill's elbow went,
And louder grew his scream.

Then I heard him say, "Look! Look!
It's done for you and I."
Oh how the blankets trembling, shook,
When Bruin winked his eye.

I scrambled about in the blankets,
And at last got rolled around,
To find poor Bill in frantics,
And making a mournful sound.

Then he moaned in a faint low whisper,
"Pack up, for I want to go—
Far from this nest of vipers,
Out to the things I know."

BROKEN FRIENDSHIP

AN echo from the frozen seas,
With mystic sail upon the breeze;
Whispers a friendship, soft and low,
Which was quite strong some time ago.
But fate's cruel sickle swinging by
Has cut the strongest friendship tie,
Like budding flower clipped in June
It fell to earth and withered soon.

The tiny plant in great distress,
So cruelly clipped from out the rest,
Received no first aid, look, or care,
No reason why 'twas slaughtered there.
The gardener passing heard its cry,
But scarcely turned his heartless eye;
And o'er his shoulder whispered round—
"There's millions like you to be found."

AUTOCRACY'S GREED

THE day is as clear as crystal,
The sun ablaze in the sky:
This morning the North is just a ball
Of living light and joy,

Here flick'ring on the soft green lawn
The shade of willow leaves;
I count them as the soldiers gone,
To check the German thieves.

Men as men, there were no better—
Went from this our northern land;
Gone to fight with tools that glitter,
Under strict and stern command.

Hear, Oh hear! their voices calling,
From that hell-hole over there;
See, Oh see! their bodies falling,
Struggling, dying, in despair.

Shells are bursting, bombs are dropping
Sheer out of the sky;
Limbless bodies dumbly flopping,
Struggling last before they die.

Kaiser Bill—you know you're sinking
Into hell's deep, dark abyss,
For it's men like you, I'm thinking,
Through your greed you started this.

INNOCENT BLISS

THE dear golden sun is the prize I have won,
To live in its glimmer and shine;
To have all the fun in my limited run—
A living ambition of mine.

Hark you! and listen, there's something we're missing,
It may be the joy of a kiss;
I remember your rule; you said 'twas a fool
Indulged in such nonsense as this.

Whether silly or wise, I'll never disguise
My pleasure in innocent bliss;
And I tell you right here whenever you're near,
I'll always be wanting a kiss.

A girlie is mean that is proud as a queen
She holds up her head in the air,
'Tis plain to be seen she is selfish and green—
Afraid of you tossing her hair.

JUNE

WHEN June comes in all smiling
With Nature's mantle spread,
The verdant green about us
Reflects the blue o'er head.

Then latent hopes start surging,
The God that rules is there,
And lesser seems our burden,
And sweeter seems our care.

Of worth seems ev'ry blossom,
Of truth seems ev'ry bud,
All crystallized in Nature,
In June's sweet, verdant flood.

THOUGHTS

OH! isn't it good to be living
To know that others are gay;
To work with your might in all that's right;
To lighten their burdens to-day;

To forgive what may seem an insult,
With more of love, than toil;
To always reckon the result,
Before a good thing you spoil;

To always look to to-morrow
And think of the tracks you make,
For trouble is easy to borrow;
And a heart is easy to break.

AFTER THOUGHT

THESE rhymes from the pen of a prospector
Were written far out on the trail;
In the Northland air, where the soul strips bare,
And natural impressions prevail.

So take them for what they are worth, dear friend,—
When you've pictured a lonely man;
Who follows a trail, with an endless end,
With a hopeless hope for a plan.

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